

Trade Builds Towns

Trace how exchanging goods helped North American communities grow.

SS.5.E.1.1 "Identify how trade promoted economic growth in North America from pre-Columbian times to 1850."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each good that people traded, then circle each phrase that explains how trade helped people, towns, or businesses grow.

Goods on the Move

- ① Long before European arrival, Native peoples built trade networks across North America. Coastal communities exchanged shells and dried fish with inland groups. Inland traders carried copper, stone, hides, and crops such as corn. Rivers and trails connected villages. Trade gave people materials unavailable nearby, so they could make better tools, clothing, and ceremonial items. Busy exchange also supported larger settlements and skilled workers.
- ② After Europeans reached North America, trade linked continents. European merchants wanted furs, tobacco, rice, and timber. Colonists traded these goods for manufactured items, including cloth, metal tools, and dishes. Ports such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston grew as ships arrived and left. Trade created work for farmers, sailors, dockworkers, shopkeepers, and craftspeople, helping towns gain people and wealth.
- ③ By 1850, new transportation routes sped up trade. Steamboats moved goods on rivers, and canals connected waterways. Later, railroads carried products between farms, towns, and ports. Northern factories bought cotton grown in the South, much of it produced by enslaved people. As goods moved faster, businesses could sell to more buyers. This growth brought profits and jobs, but its benefits and burdens were not shared equally.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What did Native communities gain through trade, and how did this help their economies grow?

2 How did trade help colonial ports grow?

3 How did canals and railroads promote economic growth by 1850?

4 Give one way trade connected people before European arrival and one way it connected places after Europeans arrived.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Imagine that you run a small town beside a canal in 1845. Write 3 sentences explaining one local good your town could trade, what it could receive, and how the exchange could create jobs or wealth. Do not use cotton, furs, tobacco, rice, or timber.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each good that people traded, then circle each phrase that explains how trade helped people, towns, or businesses grow. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Native communities gain through trade, and how did this help their economies grow?	They gained materials that were unavailable nearby. These materials helped people make better goods and supported larger settlements and skilled workers.
2	How did trade help colonial ports grow?	Ships brought and carried away goods at ports. Trade created jobs and helped towns gain people and wealth.
3	How did canals and railroads promote economic growth by 1850?	They moved goods faster between farms, towns, and ports. Businesses could sell to more buyers, creating profits and jobs.
4	Give one way trade connected people before European arrival and one way it connected places after Europeans arrived.	Before European arrival, rivers and trails connected coastal and inland villages that exchanged goods. After Europeans arrived, trade linked continents as ships moved goods through colonial ports.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town could trade barrels of flour to a distant city. In return, merchants could bring cloth and metal tools. Millers, boat crews, and shopkeepers would earn money as the flour moved through town.

Accept answers that name a plausible local good, a trade item received, and a clear cause-and-effect explanation of jobs, sales, or wealth. Students may choose different goods and transportation details if they fit the 1845 canal setting.